

CHAPLIN BOARD OF FINANCE
Chaplin, Connecticut
Remote Special Meeting Minutes
April 26, 2021

Chairperson Dick Weingart called the remote meeting to order at 7:04 PM and read the procedures. Present were Board members Link Diwan, Jean Lambert and Victor Boomer; Alternate Bill Jenkins. Unable to attend were Board members Doug Dubitsky and Linda Caron; Alternates Peter Haines and Matt Foster.

3. SEATING OF ALTERNATES: None

4. FIRST AUDIENCE FOR CITIZENS: None

5. GUESTS: None

6. ADDITIONS OR CHANGES TO AGENDA: None

7. REPORTS:

a. Board Member Reports:

1) Board of Selectmen special meeting on April 20, 2021:

Dick Weingart reported on the BOS special meeting where there was a thorough discussion of the budget changes that dramatically affected the CIP. Another meeting was held with Dick Weingart and the First Selectman to review the budget process from the beginning including: cost factors and decrease in revenues with a harder look at the budget and agreement with recommended changes to the CIP Plan.

8. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

a. Regular/Special meeting(s) - April 19, 2021:

Motion to approve the special meeting minutes from April 19, 2021, was made by Link Diwan with the following changes:

Item #5 should read – This may require reductions to the budget or a tax increase that he does not support due to the difficult recovery from Covid. Dick Weingart reported that one of the proposed Air Conditioning units for FY 21-22 for the BOE has been removed from the CIP Plan.

Pg. 3 Item #10c-1) should read – found a used 2020 Fire Truck online for \$234,900 with new body and apparatus on an older chassis, pumper/tanker, seats 5 people with gear, 1,787 miles and 1,500 gal. tank. The budget deficit is projected to increase and could deplete the fund balance within three years requiring a tax increase or reduction of funding to the CIP Fund.

Pg. 2 Item #10c-2) bullet– move to the very end of Item #10c with no review.

The motion was seconded by Jean Lambert and carried unanimously.

Alternate Bill Jenkins signed in to the meeting at 7:20 PM and was seated for Doug Dubitsky.

9. CORRESPONDENCE: None

10. BUDGET WORKSHOP FOR FY 2021-22:

a. Consider and act on Board of Education/CES budget:

The BOE/CES FY 2021-22 proposed budget has an overall increase of 1.8% after \$25,000 reduction.

Motion to approve the FY 2021-22 BOE/CES Budget of \$3,906,805 and send to Public Hearing, was made by Bill Jenkins, seconded by Jean Lambert and carried unanimously.

b. Consider and act on preliminary Town Agency budget requests:

Dick Weingart reviewed reductions to the following Town Agency budgets: Emergency Preparedness, Library (there is supplemental documentation that Electricity had already been reduced by \$2,000), Police Protection, Public Works, Sanitation, Senior Center, Volunteer Fire Department (Dick Weingart suggested putting new equipment line items in excess of \$10,000 through the CIP process) and General Government. The total overall Town Budget for FY 2021-22 is \$9,111,294 for Public Hearing purposes. The budget will be discussed at a BOS special meeting scheduled for tomorrow.

c. Consider and act on preliminary Capital Projects Plan:

1) FY 2022-2026 CIP Plan as revised:

Dick Weingart reviewed adjustments to the CIP Plan including the following: **General Government** - Playscape at Garrison Park (2nd Phase to complete the project); Bicentennial (same funding for this year and next). **Public Safety** - Firefighter Gear replacement and Fire Hose replacement (zero out in the next fiscal year); Vehicle Replacement (Fire Truck - \$91,000 Grant applied for can only be used towards the purchase of a truck and must be used in FY 21-22, the BOS recommends purchasing a new truck to replace older 1998 Fire Truck due to the number of calls it goes on and is willing to consider used when other trucks need replacement, a new truck with reduced seating capacity would cost approximately \$385,000); Replace Generator (Fire House needs dependable power as an Emergency Command Center). **Public Works** - Road Maintenance (reduced by \$100,000 for this year, remainder will cover chip sealing that needs to be done on roads that have been upgraded); England Rd Bridge (set aside \$250,000); Equipment Replacement (replace road sweeper); Vehicle Replacement (funding to replace 22-year-old truck in FY 23-24); Drainage Infrastructure (recommended to keep funding constant); Tree Removal (zero out after this year); Senior Center Parking Lot (moved out 2 years); Sander Roof Rack (move out to the future). **Board of Education** – Floor Upgrade (replacing carpet with tile, expected to complete this summer); Replace Stage Curtain (not a priority); Gym Floor Replacement (moved out a few years unless it becomes a safety issue); Boiler Replacement (defer for another year); Electric Controls (part of heating/cooling system); Building Wing Air Conditioning Units (moved out cost for 1 unit). After expected State LOCIP funding, contribution from the General Fund Unassigned Fund Balance and funding leftover from completed CIP projects, the net CIP funding from the General Fund is \$294,657. Dick Weingart suggested that when reviewing the CIP Plan for next year, items should be vetted and assessed for priority.

2) Review completed CIP projects for potential closure: #3300.13, #3305.22, #3320.1, 3320.12: None

d. Review Preliminary FY 2021-22 overall town budget forecast (Government Operations, Capital (CIP), & Education):

Revenue - Investment interest has declined due to interest rates. Some local revenues have increased including: building permits, conveyance tax from real estate sales, transfer station fees and recording fees by the Town Clerk. State reimbursements have remained about the same with minor changes in ECS funding (decrease in the current year). Town Aid Roads has been consistent over the years. According to the CT Mirror (online news platform), the Appropriations Committee approved a budget different than the Governor's recommendations, especially for ECS funding with a change in the formula. Chaplin will lose money (net reduction of \$57,000 in aid) along with many other cities in the eastern part of the state.

1) Examine use of Unallocated Fund Balance:

The Unallocated Fund Balance could be used in many ways for FY 21-22 including: reducing the budget deficit with a transfer to the CIP, funding towards the bridge and funding towards a Fire Truck. Dick Weingart suggests funding towards the Fire Truck and taking advantage of the available grant. Link Diwan suggested reducing the deficit and running a balanced budget.

2) Review mill rate:

The mill rate is proposed to remain at 32.5 for FY 2021-22 and projected to increase 1.75 mills for FY 2022-23 due to increased costs and decreasing revenues.

3) Review tax collection rate (%) or alternative assignment of Fund Balance for anticipated loss of tax revenue:

Property Tax Collections are good for the current year (above 98%). Keeping the mill rate at 32.5 will drop total revenues for the current year and FY 21-22. Total revenues are projected to increase for FY 22-23 and FY 23-24 with an increase in the mill rate.

e. Consider and act on preliminary overall FY 2021-22 Town budget for Public Hearing:

Motion to send overall FY 2021-22 Town Budget of \$9,111,294 to Public Hearing, was made by Link Diwan, seconded by Bill Jenkins and carried unanimously.

f. Consider and act on preliminary budget explanatory notes:

The Board was presented with draft letter to residents with highlights of the proposed budget and the Executive Summary for Town Budgets (FY 2020-21, proposed FY 2021-22, and estimated FY 2022-23) that can be found on the Town website.

g. Review BOF Budget Development Calendar for FY 2021-22: See meetings listed below on the agenda.

h. Review FY 2021-22 online budget book materials and presentation:

Dick Weingart asked the Board to email feedback regarding how easy it was navigating the budget process online.

i. Other budget issues for consideration: None

11. OLD/NEW BUSINESS:

a. Consider and act on funds transfers and budget line additions/adjustments as requested: None

12. AGENDA SUGGESTIONS FOR NEXT REGULAR/SPECIAL MEETING:

- a. Regular meeting: Standard meeting agenda & FY 2021-22 Budget Workshop
- b. Special meeting(s): FY 2021-22 Budget Workshops

13. TIME AND PLACE OF NEXT REGULAR/SPECIAL MEETINGS:

- b. Monday, May 10, 2021: Budget Public Hearing & Regular Meeting and Budget Workshop @7pm (Remote Audio/Video)
- c. Monday, May 24, 2021: Annual Town Budget Meeting @7pm (In Person)
- d. Tuesday, June 1, 2021: Special Meeting to Set Mill Rate for FY 2021-22 @ 8pm- following budget referendum (Remote Audio/Video)

e. Monday, June 14, 2021: Regular Meeting and Approve Revenue Budget @ 7pm (In Person)

14. ADJOURN:

Motion to adjourn (9:15 PM) was made by Bill Jenkins, seconded by Jean Lambert and carried unanimously.

*Respectfully submitted by Kathleen Scott
Recording Secretary*